



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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takes us into *A Mountain Hollow, Down the Valley, Along the Shore, Across the Plains, to A Dead Volcano, A Granite Highland*, and he opens our eyes and teaches us to observe and infer, and to interpret the great changes that have taken place in the earth's surface by these indications of change which an observant eye will note in the present. Geology in the professor's hands is no mere stone and hammer science, but is quick with the beauty of the world and with the curious interest which attaches to the action of living forces. The student, who has gone carefully through these pages, will question sea-cliff and boulder, comb and ravine, moor and mountain hollow, until each yields up its secret and tells, clearer than a print page, why it is that which it is. We wish there had been a chapter devoted to "Landscape and Formation," dealing, for example, with such facts as the lovely green of the lower slopes of the West Riding fells, and the harsh and sombre aspect of their summits. Why? Because the Fells are of limestone capped with millstone grit, the one yielding a turf nearly as soft and verdant as that of the chalk, the other a sparse covering of heather. We hope many students will avail themselves of Professor Cole's charming out-of-door introduction to geology.

Open Air Studies in Botany, by E. L. Praeger (Griffin & Co.) Professor Lloyd Praeger's book is on somewhat similar lines to that of Professor Cole. Every plant is studied in its own habitat behaving as 'tis its nature to. "We stand," says the Professor, "in fancy out in the open country with the wild flowers at our feet, the hum of insects and the rustling of the wind in our ears. . . . Thus only can we hope to comprehend the life of a plant or of a plant community, and appreciate the conditions under which each species lives, and the adaptations by which each is able to maintain its position in the plant world and fulfil its proper functions." This is more and more felt to be the true spirit in which botany must be studied. Mr. Praeger takes us to examine the plants of the daisy-starred pasture, of the riverside, of the shingle, of the hedgerow, of the bog, even of a city rubbish heap; and we are much the better prepared to treat plants with sympathetic interest when we begin by perceiving how they get their livings. It rests with the student to find, in his own neighbourhood, localities as much as possible like those Mr. Praeger describes, where he will probably find the same orders of plants. We rejoice in a book which requires that the botanist should be, in the first place, a field-naturalist.

The Flowering Plant, by A. Davis (Griffin & Co., 3/6). A simple and clearly written manual, dealing chiefly with vegetable morphology and vegetable physiology. The author says in his preface:—"The present work has been written with the intention of illustrating the first principles of botany by means of common flowering plants. No previous knowledge is assumed and the style is made as simple as possible." The style of the book justifies the preface, the arrangement is excellent, and the teaching is up to date.

Cookery for Common Ailments, by P. Browne (Cassell & Co., 1/-). "This book," we are told, "is intended to serve as a practical dietetic guide to the invalid and in its pages it is hoped the reader will find the food problem stated . . . in the form of actual dishes which will prove

both digestible and palatable." The special feature of the book seems to us to be that every "common ailment," such as gout, rheumatism rickets, scurvy, scrofula, anæmia, has its own series of menus. We feel that the ailments will jostle and be jealous of each other. Certainly some of them enjoy far nicer dishes than do the other poor things. The dietaries appear to us to be very sensibly arranged.

A Year's Cookery, by P. Browne (Cassell & Co., 1/-). "This book is intended to supply menus for every day in the year, with recipes for the dishes recommended and practical instructions for their preparation." We are very glad to welcome a cheap edition of "Phyllis Browne's" invaluable cookery book. No housewife should be without it. The menus for breakfast, luncheon and dinner, the directions for marketing and the thoroughly practical instructions for cooking, could hardly be improved upon.

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—May I call the attention of the readers of the *Parents' Review* to the Art for Schools Association, which has existed for some 15 years under the presidency of Mr. Ruskin. A quotation from the Society's report will best explain its aims:—

"Objects of the Association.—The Art for Schools Association was founded in 1883, with the object of supplying an educational basis for the good work already being done by Loan Exhibitions of Pictures in poor districts of London and other large towns. . . . The idea of the founders of the Art for Schools Association was that much might be done to educate and feed the taste of children by simply placing in the class-rooms of Elementary Schools, a few good prints and photographs of beautiful and interesting works of art, such as most people of taste take care to have in their own houses. With this view, they put themselves in correspondence with the principal art publishers of London, and obtained permission to sell to Elementary Schools such of their publications as seemed most likely to interest the young, at rates much below the market prices. The catalogue* of the works supplied in this way through the agency of the Art for Schools Association comprises upwards of 400 photographs, engravings, etchings, and chromolithographs, from the works of old masters and living artists, as well as studies from nature, of birds, and beasts and flowers."

The founders' idea that children's taste should be fed on that which is good applies as much to our own nurseries and schoolrooms as to Elementary Schools, and many mothers may be glad to find in a visit to the office, 29, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, an opportunity of choosing something to decorate their walls, which would prove not only a lasting, but an increasing pleasure.

* Price, 4d. School-marked, 6d.

The Association deals with various publishers, *e.g.*, The Fine Art, Arundel, Fitzroy Picture and Hellenic Societies, and the Berlin and Autotype Companies, and their works include etchings, engravings, photographs, heliogravures, chromolithographs, platinotypes, etc., etc.

Many reproductions of our National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery pictures are to be had, for instance, the "Heads of Angels," "Vision of St. Helena," "The Doge Leonardo Loredano," Rembrandt's "Old Lady," and others; also Millet's "Angelus and Gleaners," Watts' "Love and Death," Hollier's Photographs after Burne Jones, and some Natural History studies both in black and white, or sepia, and colours.

The Association has two classes of members:—(1) Associates, who make a donation of one guinea to the publishing fund, and are entitled to purchase the Society's own publications at reduced prices; and (2) Annual subscribers of one guinea, who receive copies of the publications each year.

It has been suggested that the P.N.E.U. should make a donation, and that all its members should thereby have the privilege of Associates of the Society extended to them. There are special reductions made if the pictures are purchased for Elementary Schools, Workhouses, or Hospitals. Any P.N.E.U. members wishing to benefit by the associateship can either send their names at once to the Secretary (Miss M. L. Cooper), 29, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, who will keep a register, or when making an application or sending an order can refer to their Branch Secretary through whom the transaction can be carried out. It must be understood that no fee in any way is implied, but that it is only and solely on the Society's *own* publications that reduction in price is possible unless the pictures are for Schools, Hospitals, or Workhouses. Any intending purchaser would do well to secure a catalogue, which gives all the information required. On and after January 1st, 1899, the scheme will be begun, and I hope that many members, especially those living in London, may be induced to purchase some of the 400 or more different works included in the list. A catalogue marked with the school prices costs 6d. and postage 1d. The Society's own publications are chiefly historical portraits, studies of birds, flowers, etc., and four of the Raphael Cartoons, Durham and Salisbury Cathedral, etc. There are also some especially beautiful reproductions of Tinworth's reliefs, "The Prodigal Son," "Genesis, and the passage of the Red Sea." In conclusion, I strongly recommend a visit of inspection to those who think the principle a valuable one.

Believe me, faithfully yours,

I. B. S. THOMPSON.

DEAR EDITOR,—If you will kindly allow me, I should like to relate an experience and to make a suggestion, though the suggestion may prove to be a superfluous one. My first child was born at the beginning of this year, and as I entirely agree with the dictum that education begins in the cradle, I was anxious that my child should receive the right training from the beginning. I had thought and read a great deal about education, I had watched the youthful years of many nephews and nieces, had reflected on my own childhood and had definite ideas about how I would bring up

my child. But as I have always cared more for children when they have learned to talk than before that age, I did not happen to know much about the management of them (except with respect to food and clothing) during their first year. Indeed, no one but a mother, or one who fills a mother's place, is likely to know much of the details of a baby's every-day life in the nursery. Aware of this deficiency in my preparedness for motherhood, I tried to get a nurse who should be of assistance to me, and took one who had had long experience of nursery life, and was most warmly recommended by a mistress, all of whose children she had brought up. I then set to work to watch carefully what she did, why she did it, what ideas she had on the bringing up of a child, and what I could myself learn from observation as to the proper way to go about it. By these means I arrived at two conclusions: first, that the formation of habit is the main thing to consider in the first months; secondly, that my nurse had never thought or been taught to think of the importance of habit, and was quite incapable of apprehending it. A certain habit she could form, namely cleanliness, but beyond this she did not consider the subject at all. Always kind and patient, she was unobservant, not firm, inaccurate, and accustomed to underrate the importance of small things. She was very fond of the expression "only a little." I was learning fast, and was more than ever impressed with the great importance of what seem like trifles, and of the supreme importance both negatively of not forming bad habits, and positively of forming good ones. So that when I had satisfied myself that I could not hope to educate my nurse, I parted from her. But this experience has made me feel very strongly how much young mothers must be in the power of their nurses, especially if the latter have had a long nursery life. To them experience is apt to be everything, reflection and theory nothing. I am not young, and I have the courage of my opinions; consequently I was able to reject bad advice, forbid what I knew to be wrong, and insist on what I had convinced myself was right. If I had been young or wanting in self-confidence it might have been very different. As it was, I often needed advice. I took in the *Parents' Review*, and borrowed some back numbers, hoping to find hints on the details of an infant's daily life, but I found nothing. The suggestion that I have to make, therefore, is this: that, if it has not been already done, some advice to mothers on the management of children in their first year should be published in your valuable review. It needs to be written by someone of experience, allied to theory. There are all sorts of ways of going wrong, and these should be pointed out for avoidance. For instance, my nurse wanted me to get a "comfort" for my baby, because in his first three months he cried when he had finished his bottle. Of course, I stood out against this; it is the beginning of as bad a habit as can well be formed. Some nurses, again, think that regularity and punctuality do not matter, whereas they involve association of ideas, formation of habit, and health. There are so many pitfalls, and it makes a great difference to a child at the end of its first year whether mother and nurse have fallen into these pitfalls, or whether they have kept out of them.

Again, even in those early months, the influence of the nurse's character upon the child's character is great. If you give to a quick, eager, restless

baby, always on the look out for amusement, a slow, stupid nurse who is not clever enough to divert its attention when anything that it dislikes has to be done, you will have temper, screaming, passion. These will become habitual. Give it on the contrary a bright, clever woman who can sing to it, play with it, humour it a little when it gets tired, divert its attention from disagreeables, you will then have the same child happy and good, the habit of screaming will not be formed.

Again, you must not give a very nervous, excitable baby to a young and injudicious nurse, who will encourage its fits of excitement, but rather one of a calm judicious mind, who will exercise a soothing influence upon it. I do not advocate giving way to children, or spoiling them, at any age; but it is well to avoid battles with babies, whenever it is possible to do so. A little diplomacy will prevent a child acquiring the habit of screaming while being dressed, and a little firmness will form the habit of going to sleep in bed without rocking, and so prevent future battles. I am convinced that a large proportion of the naughtiness of children is the consequence of mismanagement by their elders, and that the seed of it is sown in mere babyhood.

I found that the change of nurse when my baby was $4\frac{1}{2}$ months old practically put an end to the screaming, which I had so frequently heard before, and yet the second nurse was much less inclined to give way to him than the first. On the other hand she was much cleverer and more resourceful in amusing him.

There is a great deal to be said on the subject of the association of ideas and the formation of habit in babies, but this letter is already long, and I am writing to suggest that someone else, more experienced than myself, shall say it.

I do not wish to sign my name on account of what I have said about my nurses.

I am, yours faithfully,
W. E. R.

DEAR EDITOR,—The discussions in the *Times*, to which I referred last month, on the "Physique of Boys at Public Schools," and on the "Training of Teachers," was continued during the latter part of November. From a doctor's letter I make the following extract:—

"Children on emerging from infancy are no longer treated as children, but as 'little adults,' and are nourished, or attempted to be, on so-called foods which tempt the palate, but do little towards constructing or supporting the frame. The simple, but perfect, foods which formerly figured in nursery and schoolroom, such as milk, oatmeal, and other cereals, with really nutritious bread instead of simply inflated starch, articles which contain all the bone-making and tissue-forming constituents in their proper proportions, in the readily assimilable form so essential to healthy youth, have given place to excess of meat, tea, starch, jam, sardines, and savouries, things which not only do not nourish the frame, but are productive of every kind of dyspepsia, troubles of nervous system, blood derangements, anæmia, and the like. . . . The simple foods, as I call them, have come to be so little valued, and too often so carelessly prepared, that nothing is considered to be attractive or of any worth

as a nourishing agent that has not come from the butcher, whereas meat ought to be regarded as a promoter of nerve force or energy only. To furnish an excess of this to the schoolboy at the expense of his skeleton is surely not good policy. . . .

"When the growing boy moves to the preparatory or to the public school his real requirements are no better met. A breakfast of tea and starchy material, with or without meat, is apt to be followed by a perhaps more substantial meal, but one that is often of an unattractive and unsatisfying nature, and this is supplemented later on with more tea, &c. Tea unfortunately appears to be almost universally selected as a beverage twice in the day; but such a beverage, certainly in early life, can only have come into use because, as the late Ernest Hart described it, 'it is the easiest sort of hot infusion which bad cooks, careless housewives, and thoughtless mothers can prepare.'"

In this connection should be noted the alarming increase of suicide amongst children in Germany. According to a recent statistical report of the Educational Department, during the last ten years, 407 school children in Prussia alone succumbed under the strain of education and took their own lives before they had arrived at the age of fifteen.

The most interesting article in the magazines, to my mind, is "French Views of an English University," in the *Nineteenth Century*, by Mrs. Woods. After glancing at the impressions recorded of Oxford by Taine, Bourget and Daudet, the writer gives an admirable summary of *Souvenirs d'Oxford* by M. Jaques Bardoux, who recently spent some months there as an undergraduate. "Neglecting our Customers," in the same magazine by Miss Lambert, contains many points of value, especially to secondary schoolmasters, which have of late been frequently insisted upon in consular reports from all parts of the world.

In the Presbyterian *Monthly Messenger* for December, Dr. J. H. Vincent gives a splendid column of advice under the heading, "If I could be a boy again."

PATER JUNIOR.

P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by Miss FRANCES BLOGG, Sec., 28, Victoria Street, S.W.

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